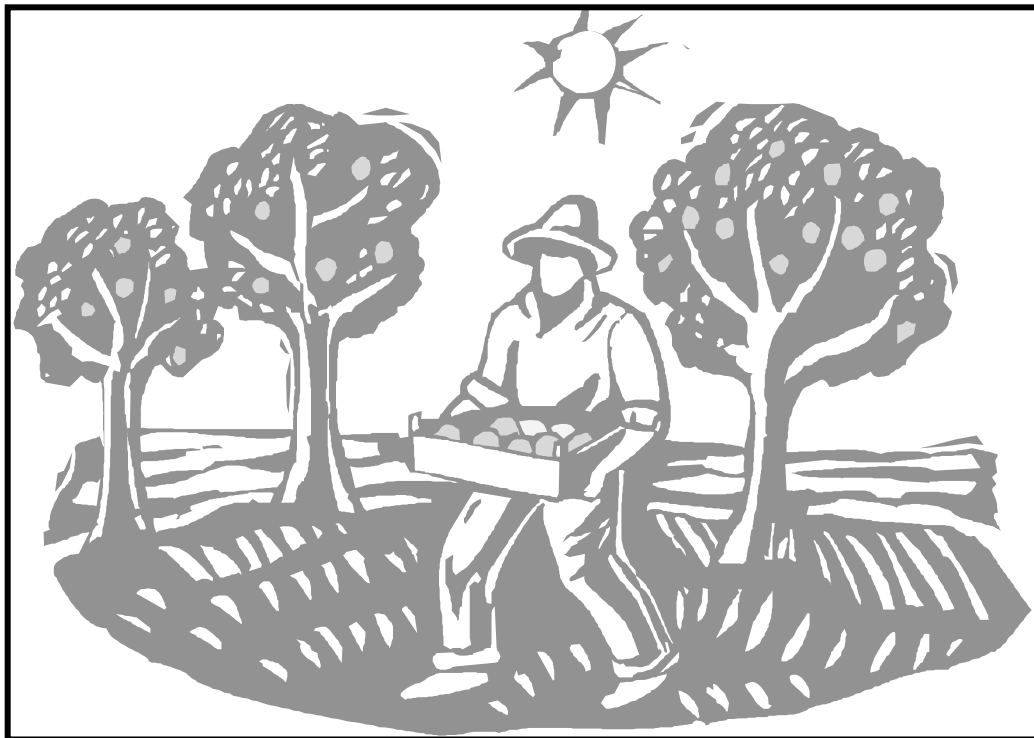

URBANDALE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A Just Peace and Open and Affirming congregation



AUGUST 2010

THE CALL

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Ponderings from Your Pastor

“Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.” Proverbs 22:6 (NRSV).

Many of you probably learned this verse as a child from the King James Version: “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” It has been one of the scriptural foundations for the educational efforts of Jews and Christians for millennia. As an empty-nester, I look back on the development of my children’s character, and I recognize the importance of what they experienced as small children. Some of the things we tried to instill in them as toddlers have taken root and are now second nature to them. (Some of the things we wanted them to learn seem to have fallen on rocky ground, but that is a different article!).

The Church has long valued the training of children. We continue to offer a variety of opportunities for parents, guardians, extended families and neighbors to be actively involved in giving children a good education. So in the midst of all of the “Back to School” sales, shuffling of schedules to accommodate school, setting aside money for registration and tuition, let’s take some time to consider how it is that our children acquire the faith that is so important to us.

The most obvious is the formal education that we provide. Sunday School, Confirmation, Church Camp, youth groups and choirs—all involve careful planning and selection of curricula and time set aside to learn the stories of Jesus and the history of God’s people. It takes money and lots of volunteers to make these things work, but we are willing to commit our resources to the effort, because we believe it is important for our children to learn these things. They will be much better off “when (they are) old.”

Less obvious, but just as important, is the example that is set for them when we practice our faith. Kids are very perceptive, and when they see that our actions don’t match what our words say, they learn a lesson—one that we probably wish they didn’t! Those colorful words we use when we are angry or that mistake in our favor at the cash register that we do not correct. The way that we talk about people when they are absent or the importance we attach to material things—all of this presents a lesson to our children. And they will learn from it!

But what overrides all of these things is the experiences our children have of the faith that we practice. Developmental psychologists tell us that from the very beginnings of our lives, the most primitive parts of our brains are imprinted with experiences that determine our initial reactions to stressful situations. If we, as young children, are exposed to violence, that pattern appears in our lives as adults. If we are witness to prejudice and hate, then we are likely to adopt the same approach. If the children in our church only experience the faith as something to suffer through, they will miss the joy and fulfillment of knowing Christ. When I was a kid, we used to sing God of Grace and God of Glory fairly often. When we would get to the words, “... Grant us courage, for the facing of this hour...” I honestly thought it was referring to the torture of sitting through worship for an hour! Our children deserve better! They will gravitate toward the faith if they see it enhancing our lives and producing joy and fellowship in our congregation!

August is the time when we make all of the preparations for the education of our children, but we do them a disservice if we think only of classrooms and dry-erase boards. Our children are learning from us, whether we want them to or not. They are acquiring models of behavior and ways of viewing the world, whether they are helpful or not. They will follow our example. As they mature, they will see warts and flaws, and reject what they see as hypocritical or unfair. So let’s pay attention to how we are teaching our children. Let’s make sure that the way we are showing them is the Way that Christ has shown us. Let’s be honest about our weaknesses and demonstrate how to confess and ask forgiveness. Our children will see what we do, and find in our example a way from which they will not stray. Amen.

God’s Peace with Justice,
Pastor Dave

From Rev. Amy Murray

*“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.”
~ Marcel Proust*

This quote has been hanging on a wall somewhere in my home since I was 12 years old. I came across a set of pictures created by graphic artist, Mary Engelbreit, when I lived in St. Louis, Missouri, which happens to be her home town. Her pictures have hung in dorm rooms, bathrooms, bedrooms and now my office. I enjoy her art and the simple yet profound expressions. Her work is food for my faith journey.

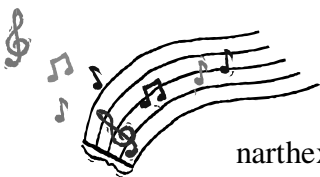
Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with a patient at hospice who is living with ALS. This disease robs you of your independence and movement. In essence, you become a prisoner in your body as you lose the ability to move over time. This particular woman (we will call Sarah) is not someone you would expect to see in hospice. She is only in her mid-thirties and has young children. I have had the honor to companion her from time to time, and hear how she has learned to have “new eyes” in a body that is slowly fading away.

Her resilience, faith, and love for life is ever abundant and incredibly empowering. It has not been easy, she would say, but she has engaged life, not wasting a single moment of it. I know I leave our visits more spiritually fed and nurtured than she does. Many of us cannot imagine what she has endured, knowing her days are numbered and that she will not see her children get married, let alone complete elementary school. She has learned to view life and her landscapes with “new eyes.” With the help of staff, family, and friends—she has made gifts for her children to receive after she dies, including videos and special jewelry. She shared that she is teaching her children to write thank you notes for gifts or kind gestures they receive. She is still very much a mom, instilling morals and values on her impressionable children.

Being a mom, now, of a one year old, I am experiencing “new landscapes” all the time. I did not realize how dangerous the world could be with sharp edges on end tables, the ever-inviting oscillating floor fan, electrical outlets, and more! At the same time, I am also learning to see the world for the miracle it is. Watching my son experience the world around him is a sight to behold. He thirsts to experience life and is amazed what you and I take for granted... like trying to catch the water coming out of the facet in the bathtub. Who knew that could be so exhilarating?!

I invite you to discover the world around you with new eyes. How would you see it if your days were numbered? Or if you were a young child discovering life for the first time? Life is a journey of discovery that invites us to explore and engage *all* of it. May you see the landscapes of your life with new eyes and truly see the miracles all around you.

*Shalom,
Rev. Amy*



SO... You Wanna SING or RING?

Registration forms for the SOS choir and Bell choirs can be found on the narthex table. I anticipate many new faces in these groups this fall. Please fill out a registration form and leave it in the office in my box. We are currently looking for a coordinator for the Wednesday Nite Live dinners. Also, if there are adults who would like to help in the preparation of these meals, please let the office know. Looking forward to a great year! *Bobby Stinnett*

Greetings from the Moderator

One of the most powerful quotations from Chapter 1 in *The Leader's Journey* claims that “if you keep doing what you’ve been doing, you’ll keep getting what you’ve been getting.” The title of the chapter is “The Need for Personal Transformation,” which “happens best as an inside-out process.” The authors suggest that if we expect to have an influence in the world, which would include our families, work environment, church, and social milieus, we must focus first on ourselves and change our own behaviors. Because “we have the most control over ourselves,” it is only natural to begin with internal change. I am not suggesting that each of us have the mindset of “This is all about me,” nor do I recognize that this changing process is going to be an easy task.

The chapter outlines a threefold process for this personal transformation experience. The first step is a commitment to personal obedience, which basically means taking responsibility and acknowledging that “we have a part to play in what happens” in everyday life. It is our natural human tendency to always place blame on external circumstances or in the laps of others. Instead, the authors recommend that we listen to God’s voice, “Do not look to external symptoms. . . . Look at your own life. Look at your own responsibility. Look at how you have contributed to the circumstances around you, and hear my call to the radical repentance that results in your own personal transformation.”

The second component is creating the appropriate environment. The best environment for this personal transformation to take place is “in the context of a loving community that extends grace and truth.” Living in grace means “creating an environment where an individual experiences acceptance in spite of failure.” I think we have intentionally created such an environment at Urbandale UCC. However, grace is insufficient by itself. We also must speak the truth, which is not always easy to do. Hopefully, as we grow and begin to implement more of the family systems theory into our culture, each of us will gain the courage to live Matthew 18 experiences on a daily basis and speak the truth.

The third ingredient in this personal transformation process is living a reflective lifestyle. Each of us may have a different definition or idea about what a reflective lifestyle might be. However, “the classic disciplines of the Christian faith—worship, solitude, fasting, prayer, silence, and study—are essential to the formation of Jesus’ character in our lives. . . . Marginalizing these practices robs them of power in our lives.” In their discussion about the reflective lifestyle, the authors ask two powerful questions: “Do you have a prayer life, or a life of prayer? [and] “Do you relegate Jesus to a quiet-time encounter early in the morning, or engage in a reflective lifestyle that seeks to know Jesus’ presence in every moment of the day?”

I leave the challenge in your hands, my friends. We have the beauty of a community of grace and truth at Urbandale UCC. However, if we want to experience personal transformation, each of us must make a commitment to personal obedience and living a reflective lifestyle. The outcomes of personal transformation are incredible because “personal transformation comes when our relationship with God is not just once part of our lives. Personal transformation is fueled when Jesus becomes a dynamic, ongoing presence every moment we live.”

Randy Jedele, Moderator

Confirmation Class 2010-11: Claiming Our Faith, Finding Our Voices

Are you entering the 8th or 9th grade? Are you ready to learn more about our church and to grow in your life as a Christian? Confirmation class is designed for you! This is your chance to explore our history and who we are today—through music, art, and other expressions of faith. At the end of the school year, you will have an opportunity to join Urbandale UCC as an adult member! Pastor Dave will lead this class on Wednesday nights from 6:45–8:00pm, starting **September 8th**.

Thank You For Your Support!

Dear Partners in Ministry,

One of the most pleasant aspects of my work is saying “Thank you!”

The work of the Iowa Conference—our efforts to build leadership capacity for the benefit of our churches—is a work that depends entirely on a multitude of generous partners and supporters. Were it not for the generous gifts of your people and your church, the work we do on your behalf wouldn’t be possible.

Thank you for your faithful support of “Our Church’s Wider Mission.” All of us who work on your behalf in the wider church are cognizant of the trust you place in us by participating in financial support of OCWM. We are your Agents for the support and enhancement of local church ministry here in Iowa.

...Those congregations which support OCWM and all of the four special offerings of the United Church of Christ (One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need and the Christmas Fund) are especially recognized for that commitment to our common work.

Thank you and God Bless you!

Rich Pleva, Iowa Conference Minister

Caregivers 2 Meeting

Caregivers 2 will meet on **Tuesday, August 17** at 5:30pm at Laura Fefchak’s house. Her address is 4231-126th Street. Debbie and Laura will take care of table service, meat for grilling, and beverages. If you would like to bring a salad or dessert to share, that would be great!

This will be a time to check in with one another and talk further with Pastor David about how our group works. Please join us for some end of the summer fellowship!

New Member Classes

New Member Classes began on Sunday, July 25 and continue on **August 1, 8 and 15** at 11:30am following worship. Persons interested in joining the church will have the opportunity to do so on **Sunday, August 29**. Please contact Jennifer Gardner to sign up (so we have enough lunch for you). She can be contacted by e-mail at jennifer.gardner@urbucc.org, or phone the church office, 276-0625. Please let us know if childcare is needed.

Pray for our 2010 Pilgrim Heights Campers and Leaders

Ashley Dhainin	Maeve Greising	Josh Dhainin	Ashley Denning
Seth Gardner	Mark Siegel	Jeremy Boal	Matthew Siegel
Jacob Walters	Michael Walters	Leah Gardner	Makayla Carter-Shields
Chris Jordan	Kendrick Santos-Briggs	Barb Woodsmall	Jonah Schaeffer
Julanie Carter	Ken Briggs	James Schaeffer	Sienna Schaeffer
Maleika Carter	Alma Sims	Miriam Cline	

Youth News

Calling all 3rd-6th Grade Youth!

You now have a youth group of your very own. Please thank Chris Jordan and Ken Briggs, who have agreed to be your fearless leaders! Mark your calendars for Sunday, **September 12** from 4-6pm. Please stay tuned to the bulletin and CALL for upcoming events planned just for you.



Holy Shirt!!

Final Orders are **DUE Sunday, Aug. 8**. Order forms are available on the narthex table to turn in to Rev. Amy. We still need 20 more orders! T-shirts will be available the end of August. **Please wear yours on Homecoming Sunday, September 12 and show your UCC pride!**

EIW Unit for August: "Helping Hands"

Our preschool-2nd graders will be exploring what it means to help others. Through a variety of games and activities our children will be empowered to help others of all ages. The Everyone Is Welcome ministry compliments the "Kids in Action" program over the summer as all of our children, youth and adults will work together to serve others. **Please sign-up to volunteer in EIW** and with the "Kids in Action" program this summer and get hands a helping!

THANK YOU for Camperships!

Many thanks to all of the UCC family who have prayed for our campers, leaders and PH staff. Your generosity providing funds is much appreciated. We have a record number of 19 campers so far this year!

Sunday School Registrations NEEDED for 2010-11

Do you have a child in Sunday school? Please help out our Sunday school teachers by filling out a registration. This information helps us to plan classes and provide the best experience for your child. Registrations are available on the narthex table. Please turn in to Rev. Amy Murray by **Sunday, August 29**.

UCC Children and Youth Need You for 2010-11!

The 2010-2011 Sunday school year is right around the corner! Our classes have grown and we will now have **6 classes instead of 5**. I am very happy that many of you have come forward with your interest. **Teachers are needed for the Jr. High class, as well as our upper elementary class.** Contact Amy Murray with your interest.

Attention Sunday School Teachers!

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, August 7** from 10am-noon. Please come and prepare your classroom for the 2010-11 program year. Your **curriculum available** to pick up from Rev. Amy.

Back-to-School Backpack Drive

There are kids and families right here in Urbandale that need our help preparing for school. Please check out the list in the narthex for items needed, so children in our community can begin school with the tools to succeed. Thank you for your generosity! See Meredith Ward-Parks or Rev. Amy Murray with any questions.

*For pastoral care, please contact Pastor Dave at 276-0625 (church office),
574-514-6154 (cell) or david.sickelka@urbucc.org.*

August 2010**Who... What... Where... When...**

	August 1 Communion	August 8	August 15 Food Pantry	August 22	August 29
Scripture	Luke 12:13-21	Luke 12:32-40	Luke 12:49-56	Luke 13:10-17	Luke 14: 1,7-14
Preaching	Pastor Dave	Pastor Dave	Pastor Dave	Pastor Dave	Pastor Dave
Liturgist	Marci Freer	Maryellen Knowles	Elaine Lundstrom	Jeff Sontag	Randy Jedele
Music Leadership	Sarah Sontag	Raggedy Band	Emily Sheridan	Nathan Wiley	Carol Looney
Ushers & Greeters	Laura Fefchak Jennifer Gardner Jo Lilley Jeff Couch	Jerry Woods Dianne Woods Jim Nervig Robby Nervig	Sandy Dixon Ray Bowler Chris Gonzalez Nancy Boyer	Sharon Johnson Sandy Gahn Monica Sutter Dean Bisterfeldt	Linda Grathwohl Gordon Dunn Nancy Young John Young
Acolytes	John & Nancy Young	Jerry & Dianne Woods	Chuck & Jake Emblen	Heather Schott & Hattie Bagbey	Karilyn & Ryan Nussbaum
Nursery	Deb Beery TBD	Debbie Gannon Deb Beery	Deb Beery TBD	Deb Beery TBD	Deb Beery TBD
EIW Room*	Washburn Family	Tina Carter TBD	Ashley Dhainin TBD	Susan Joynt Mary Minard	TBD
Opening the Church	Chris Jordan	Jeff Couch	Mark Siegel	Jerry Woods	Todd Peterson
Offering Recorders	Chris Jordan Ruth Rasmussen	Ruth Miller Tom Rendon	Steve Chandler Mark Siegel	Karen Capps-Davis Geri Jacobs Jim Nervig	Todd Peterson Joyce Hjort
Sound Booth	Jon Duvick	Scott Davis	Kevin Gannon	Ray Bowler	Robby Nervig

*EIW Room stands for "Everyone Is Welcome" Room.

**September 2010 CALL DEADLINE:
Sunday, August 15 – 9:00 am**

Activities & Events

August 2010

August 2010							September 2010								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
32	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	36			1	2	3	4	
33	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	37	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
34	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	38	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
35	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	39	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
36	29	30	31					40	26	27	28	29	30		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship: Communion 11:00am New Member Class 2	1:30pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm All Team Night	12:00pm Lunch w/Pastor Dave	7:30pm AA			10:00am Sunday School Cleanout
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship 11:30am New Member Class 3	1:30pm Staff Meeting 3:00pm ASF Meeting 7:00pm Leadership Team	12:00pm Lunch w/Pastor Dave	5:30pm Community Spaghetti Meal 7:30pm AA	5:30pm Art Club	Rev Amy away	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Rev Amy away CALL Deadline 9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship 11:30am New Member Class 4	1:30pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Scout Leaders Meeting	12:00pm Lunch w/Pastor Dave 5:30pm Caregivers' 2 Picnic	7:30pm AA			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship 12:00pm Pastor Luncheon	1:30pm Staff Meeting	5:30pm Art Club	7:30pm AA	Pastor Dave away		4:00pm Bagbey-Schott Wedding
29	30	31				
New Members Join 9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship 11:00am New Member Reception	1:30pm Staff Meeting	12:00pm Lunch w/Pastor Dave 5:00pm Homeless Shelter Meal				

Our Condolences go to the family of **Leta Van Pelt**, who passed away on July 6, 2010. Leta was a member of Urbandale UCC since 1950. A memorial service was held at Urbandale United Church of Christ on Monday, July 12.

◆ Food Pantry for August ◆

We have received a report from DMARC about our contributions to the DMARC Food Pantry for 2009 and the first quarter of 2010. Our cash contributions in the first quarter of 2010 were \$537, which is about 20% of what we gave in all of 2009. Our food item contributions in the first quarter were 1,224, almost 50% higher than all of 2009. Once again we are meeting an increasing need for help with an increase of giving.

For August, please bring **4-6 diapers** for the Urbandale Food Pantry personal items. For food items, bring **brown rice**, either regular or instant. And of course, you can always write a check to the church with DMARC in the memo line and they will be able to buy what they need.

For questions, call Ray at 989-0597 or e-mail him at ray.bowler@urbucc.org. You can call Eileen Bogges, the Urbandale Food Pantry's coordinator, at 251-6688 for information or to volunteer.

Fresh Produce Needed at Urbandale Food Pantry

If you have extra produce from your garden or participated in the *One Member, One Plant* program, please bring your produce to church on Sunday mornings. There will be buckets to accept your donation that will then be delivered to the Urbandale Food Pantry. If you would prefer to donate directly to the Urbandale Food Pantry, their hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10am – 2pm. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated by the growing number of Urbandale Food Pantry clients!

UCC Unique Card Creations

The UCC Art Club Needs 'Extra Hands'!

This summer, UCC Art Club will be working hard on a new desktop calendar for 2011. Many of our calendar pages are hand-made, so we are looking for volunteers to help us glue, cut, attach, etc.! If you are interested in helping our small group construct the calendar pages we will meet in Fellowship Hall from 5:30 – 9 pm on the evenings below:

Thursday, August 1

Tuesday, August 24

Thursday, September 9

Questions? Email Ann Boes at ann.boes@urbucc.org

COMING EVENTS:

Look for details of this and other coming events on the Community Events Bulletin Board!

Sunday, August 29: You are invited to the AMOS Kick-Off Event for October 24th Issues Summit, 3:00pm, First Christian Church (in the sanctuary), 25th & University. Watch the Sunday bulletin for more details.

The Caregiver's Corner:

Care-giving to Gay & Lesbian Brothers & Sisters ~ Part II

By Don Walters

Last month I began a series of articles for *The CALL* on how we here at Urbandale UCC can be better caregivers to our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters. In particular, I sent a survey to four gay men and four lesbian women who are members of the congregation. This month I'm going to continue to report to you some of the results I received to my survey questions.

I asked the survey respondents, "What should we as caregivers *not* say and do to gay and lesbian people?" One respondent said we should not judge and condemn gay and lesbian people. Rather we need to show love and acceptance as Jesus shows to all of us. Do not say, "You are too sensitive. Equality takes time. Be patient." These statements are not helpful. They may be experienced as unsupportive by gay and lesbian people.

Do not make assumptions about gay and lesbian people. Their sexual orientation is only one part of what it means to be a human being. Do not say that being gay or lesbian is a "lifestyle" that we choose. Do not discuss personal things about those people we care for. Do not single out an individual as a gay or lesbian person.

Another question I asked was, "Is there anything in particular we can do for a single gay or lesbian person?" One couple said to support and include gay and lesbian people in social functions. Do not assume a single gay or lesbian person is lonely, unhappy, etc. Many straight and gay people are very comfortable living as single people.

We need to be a friend to gay and lesbian people. We can encourage them to also find gay and lesbian friends. We should suggest resources and organizations that provide good support to gay and lesbian people. We need to love, accept and treat gay and lesbian people just as we would straight people (in a good sense of the word "treat"). In the end, most everyone is searching for a heart of gold, thus we should love one another.

I went on to ask the respondents, "How could we better support the spouse of a gay or lesbian person?" One couple stated we need to be mindful of how being oppressed affects people. Couples may not experience support and affirmation from their families of origin and this can be very upsetting. We need to be a loving and supportive presence to the spouse. We can offer support, understanding, and be a good listener to the spouse.

As you can see, there are many sensitive and insightful thoughts about how we all can be better caregivers to gay and lesbian people. I will continue this series of articles in future editions of *The CALL*.



URBANDALE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

9:15 am Coffee & Conversation

10:00 Worship

The Rev. David P. Sickelka, Senior Pastordavid.sickelka@urbucc.org
The Rev. Amy Murray, Ministry Program Coordinator amy.murray@urbucc.org
Elsie P. Naylor, M.M., Music Program Directorelsie.naylor@urbucc.org
Bobby Stinnett, M.M., Organist,
 Children/Youth Choirs and Handbells Director.....bobby.stinnett@urbucc.org
Tara A. McConnell, Office Coordinator tara.aukes@urbucc.org
Sadmira Omerhodzic, Custodian sadmira.omerhodzic@urbucc.org
The Rev. Gayle Strickler, Jr.,
 Adjunct Minister for Community Concernsgayle.strickler@urbucc.org

Church office hours are 9:00am – 3:00pm